

LITERARY NOTES.

M. Taine promises a fourth and last volume to his history of the origins of contemporary France, which will deal with "The Revolutionary Government."

The Critic of to-day contains a portrait of Hawthorne, and an account by Mrs. Julia Ward Howe of her meeting with the shy novelist, when she saw him only twice, though she lived within a few miles of him for several years.

Professor Max Müller has been induced by Macmillan & Co. to undertake a translation (the first into English) of the original text of Kant's "Critik der reinen Vernunft," in honor of the centenary of this work, first published at Riga, in 1781. Professor Noire will write an historical introduction, and the changes and additions made in subsequent editions will form supplements.

M. Ernest Daudet, brother of the novelist, has written an exhaustive work on the royalist conspiracies in the south of France during the French Revolution ("Histoire des Conspirations Royalistes du Midi"). He had access to a great many unpublished documents, and it is said has made a picturesque and important contribution to French history. The episodes of which he writes have been treated hereof with some attention.

A closer view of Victor Hugo's new work, "Les Quatre Vents de l'Esprit," shows two volumes, each divided into two books, the latter being entitled epic, lyric, dramatic and satiric. But instead of arranging them in this natural order, he places "Le Livre Satirique" first. This contains only a few pieces of political import, and most nearly resembles his "Châtiments." In the same volume is the dramatic book, comprising a one-act comedy and a drama in three acts, having in each one of the leading characters the same person, Gulliver, Duke of Swabia, an eighteenth century rood, "Le Livre Epique" is a poem of fifteen hundred lines on the French Revolution, the manuscript of which bears the date Christmas, 1857, at which time Victor Hugo was an exile in Geneva. The personal pronoun is heavily worked in this book, and in one place the poet cries:

I am hateful! Why I begin! I defend! The weak, the timid, the little ones, the children, I am excommunicated! Why I choose those lips without venom, hearts without guile.

In "Punch" in a new farcical comedy, says The Fall Mall Gazette, "Mr. H. J. Byron is said to have approached closer than usual to the master of his inspiration, Charles Dickens. The play sounds well; for Mr. Byron has the happy knack of suggesting at author of the people without slavishly imitating him. How strange it is that Mr. Robertson in "Castles," "Ours," and countless plays so directly pointed at Thackeray and derived his tone from him, while Mr. Byron just as obviously sits at the feet of Charles Dickens. George D'Alroy is as Thackeray in essence as is old Middlewick a replica of Dickens. And yet neither Thackeray nor Dickens ever wrote a play." This called forth the following correction from a correspondent: "It is not quite correct to say that Mr. Thackeray never wrote a play. The 'Wolves and the Lamb' is to be found among his collected writings, in the last volume of the later editions. When first written this little play was offered to several of the London Theatres, but without success. Years afterward, on the occasion of a sort of 'house-warming' at which Mr. Thackeray gave at his new house in Palace Gardens, the 'Wolves and the Lamb' was acted by an interesting amateur company, the author himself speaking a prologue. Subsequently it was performed at one of the London theatres—I think the Olympic—but was withdrawn after a few nights. The plot of the play is identical with that of the novel "Level the Wallow," and treats of his favorite subject of mothers-in-law." We may add that the mistake as to Dickens is more remarkable. He wrote two burlettas and a comic opera which were performed in 1836-37 at the St. James's Theatre; a farce, "The Lamplighter," never acted, recast as a story; and, with Mark Lemon, a farce called "Mr. Nightingale's Diary," performed at Devonshire House in 1851, and published by J. R. Osgood & Co. in 1877.

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